

STATE LIBRARY OF PENNSYLVANIA  
main,stks  
Venus invisible,

811C85312



0 0001 00327786 8



**VENUS INVISIBLE AND OTHER POEMS**

*Other books by Nathalia Crane*

THE JANITOR'S BOY AND OTHER POEMS

LAVA LANE

THE SUNKEN GARDEN (*a novel*)

THE SINGING CROW





"Said the tiger to the lily,  
Said the viper to the rose. . . ."

VENUS INVISIBLE  
AND OTHER POEMS

*By*

NATHALIA CRANE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY  
RUTH JONAS



PUBLISHED IN NEW YORK *by*  
COWARD-MCCANN, INC.  
IN THE YEAR 1928

卷之三

Acknowledgment is made to the New York *Herald-Tribune*, the New York *World* and the Doubleday, Doran Company for privilege to re-print some of the poems in this collection.

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2019 with funding from

This project is made possible by a grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services as administered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries

## CONTENTS

THE PROPOSALS . . . . .	11
THE NIGHTINGALE . . . . .	12
VENUS INVISIBLE . . . . .	15
THE BON HOMME RICHARD . . . . .	16
FREUD . . . . .	18
UNCLE DANIEL . . . . .	19
FOSTER DIES IN BELLEVUE . . . . .	22
THE DUST . . . . .	23
OUR LOVERS . . . . .	24
THE ROYAL PRINTER . . . . .	25
PARROT IN BIRD STORE . . . . .	26
THE RELIC HUNTERS . . . . .	27
THE TREASURE HOUSE . . . . .	28
NEW MARKET . . . . .	29
MID-SUMMER MUTINY . . . . .	31
GREATNESS . . . . .	32
THE CONEY ISLAND ROAD . . . . .	33
THE WINGS OF LEAD . . . . .	35
THE LINE OF BATTLE . . . . .	41
MOLLY PITCHER . . . . .	42

THE LOST PROVINCE . . . . .	44
TADMOR . . . . .	45
THE END OF JULIET . . . . .	61
THE CROXON AUCTION . . . . .	63
MARCH OF THE SKELETONS . . . . .	64
THE PRINCE . . . . .	65
THE GREAT EXPLOSION . . . . .	66
NATURE'S MIRACLE . . . . .	67
THE MASTER OF THE WIND . . . . .	68
THE HONOR OF THE CRIB . . . . .	69
IN FORECASTLES ADRIFT . . . . .	70
BRAD OF BERKELEY COMMON . . . . .	72
WAITING FOR GOLIATH . . . . .	74
THE JAVA MAN . . . . .	75
SHERIDAN'S HORSE . . . . .	76
MISS BROOKS MAKES REQUEST . . . . .	78
THE MOON OF BROOKLYN . . . . .	79
THE PARADE OF THE POPPIES . . . . .	80
HANNAH OF HAVERHILL . . . . .	81
THE POE COTTAGE . . . . .	83
ALI BABA'S CAVERN . . . . .	84
THE WATER GUARD . . . . .	85
DANTE ON THE FERRY . . . . .	86
THE ESCORT . . . . .	88
EXODUS OF THE LEAVES . . . . .	89

## ILLUSTRATIONS

"Said the tiger to the lily,  
    Said the viper to the rose . . ." . . . . . FRONTISPICE

"Her name was Tadmor—taken from the palms;  
    Their quietness was sifting into her." . . . . . 46

"Upon a dais of Damascus blue  
    His daughter crouched and bare of any weave." . . . . . 54

"Beneath a tree  
    In ancient Turkistan  
There sits a dwarf  
    Who calmly waves a fan." . . . . . 68

"For down an old path  
    Preparing for Gath  
Came David in search of a stone." . . . . . 74



## **VENUS INVISIBLE AND OTHER POEMS**



## THE PROPOSALS

S AID the tiger to the lily,  
Said the viper to the rose:  
Let us marry so our children  
May attain the double pose.

With a feline half a flower—  
With the attar in the asp,  
We could institute a slaughter  
That would make a planet gasp.

But the lily told the tiger  
'Twas an empty enterprise  
To raise the little half-breeds  
With lanterns in their eyes.

And the rosebud gave her answer  
The while she merely smiled:  
A babe two-fourths a viper  
Would drive a mother wild.

The world is growing gentle,  
But few know what she owes  
To the understanding lily  
And the judgment of the rose.

## THE NIGHTINGALE

A NIGHTINGALE,  
Heir-suitor of the Moon  
Took station high  
Above a dour lagoon.

Below, the pool  
Arraigned an altitude  
Where stars became  
The fictions of the lewd.

As one who wears  
The ribbon of true woe  
And yet remains  
The tenant of a glow;

That nightingale  
The reacher's posture donned.  
Unlatched a spell—  
The ovals of the wand.

### *Song*

O H, cloudy ords  
Of vaporous velveteen;  
Oh, veruled mists  
Loomed in night's Engadine.

Let go the loop  
Of camis and galoon,  
That in the sheer  
I may behold the Moon.

The rose dissolved  
Is nearer than a star;  
The latless dust  
Of lilies not so far.

Joy only sees  
The altar of a need,  
And stakes the wing  
Against a channeled reed.

Reality  
A million births away,  
And contact but  
By theory in a lay.

Oh, Love declare  
If love cannot attain,  
Remoteness send  
A litter for one strain;

Since flight may fail  
The doctrines of the eye,  
And one be seized  
By stupors in the sky.



VENUS INVISIBLE

**W**e are of royal lineage  
Descended, by your leave,  
From that first curious laundress  
Who scrubbed the clothes of Eve.

When we but tip a flagon  
The tiles begin to shine,  
And marble walls uncurtain  
The Roman Twenty-nine.

If we a shawl half slanted  
Or slipped a shoulder truss,  
Great caliphs would be sending  
Their mutes to talk with us.

We would get notes in carmine:  
“For you zenanas yearn—  
“The eunuch’s in the foyer,  
“The galley torches burn.”

But we are sworn as artists  
To postures dutiful,  
And Venus bending forward  
Becomes invisible.

230657

## THE BON HOMME RICHARD

**W**E have raised the hulks of Perry  
And laureled the Shannon's dead;  
Have we no silver winches  
For a hoist off Flamborough Head?

With a Captain used to hearing:  
“Sir,” and “the ship is clear,”  
It is time we gave the Richard  
The price of a salvage gear.

It is time we sent a runner  
The route of the bos'n's lead—  
John Paul Jones at Annapolis  
And his ship off Flamborough Head.

With her battle lanterns swaying  
To the roll of an old renown,  
She is waiting the leaden sandal  
That carries the diver down.

In the rotting arm-rack lingers  
The flash of the cutlass blades,  
And back of the broadside gun-ports  
The souls of our carronades.

Oh, there are the deep sea stallions  
That sentry the Dogger's floor.  
Have we no djinns in armor  
To open an ocean door?

FREUD

EVERY Monday shudder,  
Every Tuesday scare,  
Memories of tigers  
Turning round to stare.

Art hops from the babe's bath  
Shameless even yet;  
Likely in the Charleston  
Lurks the Minuet.

## UNCLE DANIEL

UNCLE Daniel was an angel at the age of  
ninety-four,  
We kept him in a front room with a sentry at the  
door.

We doubled every outpost when our rector made a  
call—  
An angel might come trotting forth with nothing  
on at all.

He used to tell the housemaids of his early love  
affairs  
Till gigglers swept the corridors and titterers the  
stairs.

He read the latest novels, Lorna Doone and Robin  
Hood,  
And smiled as only seraph smiles when story-books  
are good.

Oh, I shall never quite forget a banquet auntie had;  
We thought to please an angel and the angel seemed  
so glad.

Our guests a college sisterhood; we spread a royal  
lunch,  
And unbeknown, I poured cologne into the Pliny  
Punch.

Forgotten blooms from bureaus in the cloister of  
a saint,  
The contents of old crystals with the titles growing  
faint.

The odors of *Narcissus* and a touch of *Phaon's Spell*,  
A half a pint of *Musk Rose* and two flasks of  
*Island Belle*.

The power in the perfumes seemed almost the same  
as wine  
When we rose to drink to learning and a class called  
"Ninety-nine."

All were gossiping of ethics and that Nine and  
Ninety class,  
When Uncle broke his silence as he sipped the  
seventh glass.

He started very gently as the Grecian trireme  
veers,  
And drops the ring at Corinth, heading for the  
Spartan piers.

He told of dusks and Dacian moons, of Phædrus  
and the fawn,  
Of rubies in a mortar crushed, of roses wet at dawn.

He drew a wondrous picture of King Arthur and  
the mere,  
And then he introduced a wall and played the  
musketeer.

There came the inside version—Cleopatra and the  
pearl;  
He said he knew that Crusoe knew that Friday was  
a girl.

He was starting on a story of adventures in Port  
Said  
When Aunt Teresa rose and led the angel off to bed.

Oh, I have often pondered—had it happe'd to  
Lorna Doone,  
Would she have gone confessing on the second  
afternoon?

Would she have carried oranges and marmalade  
and tea,  
And made an angel happy as an angel ought to be?

## FOSTER DIES IN BELLEVUE

OPEN the gate of Bellevue,  
Way for a charioteer—  
Now comes the Suwannee River,  
Foster of Pittsburgh's here.

Wardmasters waiting the draw-out;  
(He wrote "The Old Folks at Home").  
Bellevue can handle an easel  
Equal to Athens or Rome.

Give him the cot in the corner,  
Rig up the sheet for a screen;  
Nurses are jealous of singers  
Dying in "Old Nineteen."

Bellevue salutes with a post card,  
Writing addresses with care;  
Likely she thinks all are poets  
Since Suwannee River was there.

## THE DUST

**C**RUMPLING a pyramid, humbling a rose,  
The dust has its reasons wherever it goes.

Treating the sword blade the same as the staff,  
Turning the chariot wheel into chaff.

Toppling a pillar and nudging a wall,  
Building a sand pile to counter each fall.

Yielding to nothing—not even the rose,  
The dust has its reasons wherever it goes.

## OUR LOVERS

O H, we have had great lovers that we followed  
to the pyre;  
Our boasts out-do the Sabine girls—the Mosque of  
St. Sophia.

And we are very sure of ours, for when a city falls,  
They seize us and they love us and they hurl us  
from the walls.

The Arab and Mongolian, the Aryan and the Russ,  
Their names are on our tablets 'though they don't  
remember us.

And if we are forgiving and in measure can con-  
done,  
We wonder at a blindness somewhat different from  
our own.

For we have fatal memories and keep a careful  
score,  
While they seem so surprised because we never met  
before.

## THE ROYAL PRINTER

THE gods for every mortal  
Designed a talisman,  
And for the Royal Printer,  
They made the coffee can.

Before the hieroglyphic  
Became an old recluse  
They stencilled silver skillets  
With dents and berry juice.

And often in odd eras  
There comes a copy Dan  
To hand the Royal Printer  
His dented coffee can.

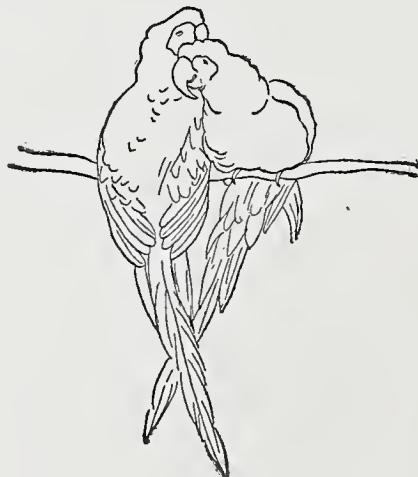
## PARROT IN BIRD STORE

### DOLORITA

I AM Dolorita Quita  
From the north of Ecuador;  
They have chained me to a cross-bar  
In a Flatbush Avenue store.

With a hundred Hartz canaries  
And an Orinoco bird,  
They are holding me for ransom  
Till my country gets the word.

In the window there are puppies  
That have promised o'er and o'er  
To watch the crowds for sailors  
Who may be from Ecuador.



## THE RELIC HUNTERS

GONE is the fancy from Heaven,  
Likewise the pagan glow,  
But the British dip a dozen  
From the bottom of Scapa Flow.

And they spoon up spicy bundles  
From a mooring in a hall,  
With the goddesses of Egypt—  
Their faces 'gainst the wall.

The Norseman digs a galley  
From a saga long grown dumb;  
The Roman lifts the lava  
From Herculaneum.

Oh, for a skinny windlass  
To fatten upon a line,  
Heaving our own lost idylls  
Clear of a shaken brine.

For we are sold to engines  
And hoops too fine to drone,  
To motors in a pintle,  
And voices in a cone.

Strange that we still have ardors—  
The dhows off Haverstraw,  
And children towing frigates  
Beyond the sidler's claw.

## THE TREASURE HOUSE

**B**ACK of the old concealments  
Cairns full of purple domes;  
Minarets lying sideways,  
Mosques in lost catacombs.

## NEW MARKET

**S**I XTY-NINE cadets from Alacaster—  
Neither Beauregard nor Jackson there to see.  
Not a lyre in all the South has sung the story  
Of the glory of our rebel infantry.

All our valley gentlemen were front of Richmond,  
Not a man was left in any true abode;  
Ina Lou ran in and screamed to old Aunt Nancy:  
“Thar’s a million Yankees on New Market  
Road.”

Then we saw another dust beyond the village.  
“Can you tell what’s moving therewards, Ina  
Lou?”  
“ ’Tis the military school from Alacaster  
“Ordered out to block the way of Mistuh Blue.”

They were little lads from Staunton and Front  
Royal,  
They were boys Virginia mothers put to bed;  
Down the Shenandoah Valley rides a damsel  
After Lee upon a bitless thorough-bred.

Sixty-nine cadets from Alacaster—  
They have halted in the square but just to load;  
Now they’re coming up in double rank formation,  
Coming up to hold the old New Market Road.

Far as Honeyville, was heard the opening volley,  
And our regiment from Antioch got through;  
To the right and left they passed the rebel infants  
Spread across the way in front of Mistuh Blue.

There were Yankees who forgot to draw the ram-  
rod,  
And the grandsons give their version thisaway:  
“We looked down a lane and saw Lee’s best divisions  
“With a trumpet-boy in front of each array.”

Some were shot while meekly staring through a  
sight-leaf,  
Some were shot while gently firing from the  
knee;  
Not a lyre in all the South has sung the story  
Of the glory of our rebel infantry.

## MID-SUMMER MUTINY

O H, fallen is the sea forsooth  
Since Sharkey moved from aft,  
And Paul Jones taught a colony  
To fortify a raft.

We hear below the barnacles  
That jape a dangling reel;  
We let a shibboleth decide  
The way to point a keel.

Our booms know not what canvas is  
The bowsprit fears to drown,  
A mention of a royal makes  
The pumps go up and down.

Our grandese doze with easy throats  
But in a forward bunk  
We celebrate with cutlasses  
The chance of being sunk.

## GREATNESS

I SING a song of greatness—  
The grandeur in a grain;  
Of seas that rim the minim,  
Of dust that breeds a plain.

Of hope in beetles' bosoms,  
Of love of butterflies;  
The valor of the thistle  
That seeks to down the skies.

I sing a song of greatness—  
The mount that holds a horde;  
The lord of all the honey,  
The dot that draws the sword.

The ardor that deposits  
In miniature a churl,  
Slips on a coat of nacre  
And then parades the pearl.

I sing a song of greatness,  
Of loomsters spinning strings,  
The ember in the glowworm,  
The candle borne by wings.

The banquets served on beeswax,  
The locust's home-brewed ale,  
And greatness quaffing gallons  
In mansions of the snail.

## THE CONEY ISLAND ROAD

A CASIA laid the Canaan routes and camel-thorn the Lode,  
The odor of the spray begot the Coney Island Road.

A world's grand corridors depart; few tread a Simplon Pass;  
The rambles of Palmyra gave their charters to the grass.

Old parallels for chariots and rally-lanes for kine,  
Went down rebuffing terminals—the stations of the brine.

They never seemed to realize that the Orders of the Sand  
Precede a cordoned Appian Way, the stroll Chi-Hoang-Ti planned.

And so they dwindled mightily, communing with the ferns,  
Till conquerors grew weary tracing avenues to urns.

Such crumbling of old boulevards aroused a vaulted wrath,  
The skies condensed by anger hurled a sea across a path.

Great billows came anointing, arid barrens overflowed—  
The tide with drawn Toledo marched the Coney Island Road.

There's joy from Jehu's statute to a firstling's ikoned want,  
When some divine reversion condescends to bless a jaunt.  
Lost caravans return to chart, the oxen swing to wain,  
And furrows gone beyond the scar, report themselves again.

They see it as intended that no inlay rules the loam—  
That highways all celestial need an altar made of foam;  
An altar amply hollowed for the thunder of an ode,  
The ocean turning tumblers on the Coney Island Road.

## THE WINGS OF LEAD \*

THE gods released a vision on a world forespent  
and dull;  
They sent it as a challenge by the sea hawk and  
the gull.

It roused the Norman eagerness, the Albion cliffs  
turned red:

“You fly the wings of logic—can you fly the wings  
of lead?

“It’s been done in faded ages changing titles for  
each writ—

“The wheel, the keel, the pinioned heel, the long-  
bow and the bit;

“The tiller and the javelin, the harp with leaden  
string,

“The pewter lens that Homer used, the ore in  
David’s sling.

“Locations in all latitudes where heroes left the  
ground

“Still show the clots of cinnabar that marked the  
last rebound.

\* Awarded the First Prize of \$500 in the Spirit of St. Louis Contest  
for the best poem on Lindbergh’s flight.

"We set no rules on engines or the drive of whirling gear—

"Our course is but a thousand leagues of doubtful atmosphere.

"Designers may parade a moth or rack the condor's spread,

"One simple stipulation—that the pinions be of lead.

"The prize is for our own good will, and that no Freudian stand

"To tell the gods that courage spawns within an empty hand."

\*       \*       \*       \*

The hawks were dropping challenges from Tokyo to Rome;

The gulls delivered cartels from Cape Town to tousled Nome.

The Nagasaki coal girls stopped to wipe their smutty eyes;

The damsels of Ferghana saw new rug tints in the skies.

A thousand ardent oilers swung the long spout twixt their nods

And tried to glimpse a meaning in the challenge of the gods.

And then one night there landed on a Mineola swale  
A plane that looked like pewter, with a carrier of  
mail.

Its wings were tinged like tea-box skins, each truss  
of shadow gray,  
Its cabin but an alcove slung beneath a metal ray.

“The Spirit of St. Louis” was inscribed upon the  
lee;  
It came from out a province that had never seen  
the sea.

The pilot entered for the course, the quarter quad-  
rant glide—  
To fly the full Atlantic and the tag ends of the  
tide.

He listed in as “Lindbergh”—just one pace beyond  
the ranks;  
He had a moon stained paddle and some star gas in  
his tanks.

A chemist from Olympus with a ladle, nicked the  
rays;  
He said the ore was purer than it was in Cæsar’s  
days.

Invisible, he passed the word, the barograph was sealed—

A plane with leaden wings went down the Mineola Field.

It rose and fell and rose again, and then attained to breath—

The raiment of the bubble when the bubble goes to death.

And somewhere near to noontime as the fishers turned to scan,

They saw a pearl gray monoplane slide east of Grand Manan.

A single motored miracle, a lead mine on each flank;

Below a shadow swept and awed the hundred fathom bank.

Upon a billow rocked and cheered a lantered spindle buoy,

The off-shore bells were chanting for the Spirit of St. Louis;

For o'er the darkened deep there flew, a carrier of mail,

His engine drunk with star gas and a berserk in the flail.

He made the course the gods had set, the quarter  
quadrant glide,  
He flew the full Atlantic and the tag ends of the  
tide.

\*       \*       \*       \*

The ruby runs a temperature—there's temper in  
the gold,  
A hero donned the wings of lead and rimmed  
wrinkled wold.

'Tis a feat that sends old Richard groping down a  
ghostly van,  
Starts a Joan doing high steps on an ancient bar-  
bican.

And the eyes of all look upward seeing signwork  
drawing nigh,  
The stony wings of Egypt coming back across the  
sky.

Ephesian Dian teaching how a legend comes to  
bloom,  
And Indra holding something new, the plummet  
laden plume.

We hear the clinking tambourine of Miriam anew,  
We believe in every miracle since Lindbergh flew  
the blue,

The wonder of the long draw when the bowstring  
is a thread—  
The beauty of a courage that can raise the wings  
of lead.

## THE LINE OF BATTLE

**T**WO-THIRDS of a fusil  
From a hard luck van,  
Half a China cupid  
Coached by Genghis Khan.

Mistress Molly Pitcher  
With the gun-swab, Oh,  
One line of a lyric  
Led by Edgar Poe.

## MOLLY PITCHER

**O**H, daughters of battalions,  
Vivandieres of renown—  
Make way for Molly Pitcher  
The Maid of Monmouth Town.

A bawling battery sergeant:  
“Who loads for Number Three?  
“Are all our spongers dying  
“Of common infantry?”

’Tis then I see a damsel  
Her water pail set down  
And lift the greasy gun swab  
In front of Monmouth Town.

Athwart the years I hear it,  
The clangor of that rod,  
A goddess swaying forward  
Across a fallen god.

Her breastplate was a camis,  
Her helmet was a frown;  
She wore no Milan tassets  
In front of Monmouth Town.

But in an action kirtle  
Slipped on the primer’s glove  
And rammed the eager round shot  
For honour and for love.

Within the halls of heroes  
On Friday of each week,  
The herald strikes a red gong—  
A knight stands forth to speak.

For every true vivandiere  
Or girlish Argonaut;  
For maids who stripped the falchion  
And threw away the slot.

A shadow lips a van horn,  
A flare unmasks a thole,  
And to Crusaders' music  
A spurred one reads the roll.

From Esther and Thermuthis  
Who starred with eye-lids wet,  
To Gertrude in the tallow,  
And Helen at the net.

And she who got an ardor  
To set a bucket down  
And won the heart—with palm leaves  
In front of Monmouth Town.

## THE LOST PROVINCE

O H, land divinely simple,  
From whence we made escape,  
Back of your lichenèd borders  
The leisure of the grape.

We had no Torquemada,  
We had no Genghis Khan;  
The dullness of our greatest  
Could not explain a fan.

But oh, we were so happy,  
We simpletons of old;  
We went around in nothing  
And never felt the cold.

We lazed for half a morning  
Before we rose to sup;  
In those days we were gentle  
And helped each other up.

## TADMOR

A PRINCESS of Palmyra long had ailed  
From an unsolved oasal indolence.

Her name was Tadmor—taken from the palms;  
Their quietness was sifting into her.

Magicians masked for safety talked with Baal;  
That somber princess did but wilt the more.

The king, her father, desert alchemist,  
Began to doubt such far off therapy.

Of simmerings by pythons certified  
He made a brew that shamed the figwort's vim.

But just before the proper bubbles showed  
There came a crisis on a sultry night.

Within her fretted octagon, unroofed,  
A palace wing and nigh unto the sands,

The heiress to this empire of the palms  
Unawninged lay in moonlight and asleep.

And suddenly there was a fearful cry—  
The lovely Tadmor in a trance had screamed.

Nude slave girls tumbled, racing for her couch;  
The night guards clashed their spears in panicked  
halls.

Red resins roused the startled terraces  
And torches swarmed in timid colonnades.

Armed eunuchs straddled trivial passages—  
Came running in great Dagon of the Watch.

Lastly the king, a leopard at his heels,  
And mounted demons spurring from each  
eye.

He found the harem filled with rocking maids  
Surrendered to the orgies of the sob.

Upon a dais of Damascus blue  
His daughter crouched and bare of any weave.

Her eyes were bigger than her anklet bands,  
An ebon crescent under either orb.

Her ashen cheeks out-paled the peonies,  
And to her heart the trembling knees were hugged.

A nude from Ind, another from the Nile,  
Were chafing insteps and a pallid brow.



"Her name was Tadmor—taken from the palms;  
Their quietness was sifting into her."



Caressingly thus spoke Palmyra's king:  
"Oh, Tadmor, name the thing that did affright.

"If mute or myrmidon has entered here  
"He shall be ripped, sand-viper filled and sewed."

#### THE PRINCESS

"I slept and dreamed, alas, that I was dead,  
"Extended on this silent blameful couch.

"A coterie of lepers, minus chins,  
"With hand bells tinkling, marched around my  
corse.

"A desert wolf, on hinders, dead himself,  
"Stole in and crossed these very hands you see.

"Groups of dead swathers came with linen rolls—  
"Prepared to wind the bandage of the tomb.

"I could not move—no tiduals of the breath,  
"And yet from half-cloaked eyes I saw it all.

"It was so true, that final insolence—  
"When Lo, I heard the buzzing of a gnat.

"A lively fly, an angel with green eyes,  
"A godly fly, an orchestra a-wing.

“He came from whence I may not yet surmise,  
“And whirled in pity thrice above my face.

“At last he dived in spirals too minute  
“For any but the lost to count a whorl.

“He raced the swathers for my left side breast  
“And stung your daughter back to life again.

“He must be some great pagan god disguised,  
“Cruising on wing as oft immortals do.

“Now this I pledge, the daughter of the king,  
“He shall have altars built of reddened gold.”

#### THE KING

“I too can tell a midnight storyette,  
“The short recital of a captured droll.

“When we surprised the Scythian horde last year,  
“Among the prisoners was an alien prince.

“A half-way boy who played Mongolian  
“Until we tripped his secret—it was Greece.

“Our ransom board moved slowly for that stray .  
“Worked odd illusions with his gnat-green eyes.

“He slacked the lid when questioners approached  
“His tongue was also blind as far as speech.

“But in his slumber open flew the eye,  
“—He dribbled of a beast called ‘Parthenon.’

“Ourselves we go when sleeping princes talk  
“And list the prodigies of northern lairs.

“Beneath a barbarous shelter of stale skins,  
“Wide-eyed he dozed, the emeralds on display.

“For his were green, as Tadmor’s are the brown;  
“And dawn his hair, as Tadmor’s braids are dusk.

“But what amazed us more than certain names  
“Was that his muttering to music turned.

“There was the everlasting twang of strings,  
“The sound of runnels and of smitten leaves.

“We caught and lost a sideway slipping theme  
“About the repetitions of the soul.

“Our battle sages said he was a mime  
“Born to relate the privacies of gods.

“To lend some pomp, your father raised the youth,  
“Assigned him quarters and a palanquin.

“A messenger was sent unto his realm  
“With small demand—a perfect Parthenon.

“Our raids were closed—a season’s loot in salt,  
“When Thessaly sent bargainers of birth.

“Their shrunken camels tottered under gold  
“And chests of dazzling oddities.

“Swords limbered to endure the triple coil,  
“And helmets one could wiggle inside out.

“A scroll was passed that courteously explained  
“The matter of a missing edifice.

“All that they wanted was a hovel boy,  
“A boy called Delos, with no pedigree.

“When we in audience produced our pawn,  
“Two old Greeks slobbered and betrayed a throne.

“And then he would not go—that sulky cub;  
“He said his travels were not quite complete.

“We waived the ransom—took it as a gift;  
“Sent our regrets in rubies to the north.

“Our guest remained with us as scientist,  
“Planning a park where divers herbs might grow.

“A clustering of old simplicities  
“Oft led, he claimed to revelations grand.

“The plan was spacious, taking in all fruits,  
“And at a festival we sanctioned it.

“The cost a mere ten thousand laborers,  
“Collectors’ caravans to borders dim;

“Some elephants to lug maturity  
“And twine enough to bale Arabia.

“Ourselves, the owner and the overseer;  
“The whole a gift for Tadmor of the Palms.

“Tomorrow when the sun well tilted lies,  
And shadows tamper with this octagon,

“Let Tadmor fix her gaze upon the wall—  
“That segment where two needled palms unite.

"If she persists in staring at these trees  
"A charm from ambush will produce the park."

#### THE SECOND NIGHT

The moon was up, in robe of Sapphic blue;  
The dusk, half risen, verified the hour.

Within the harem Tadmor's favorites  
Were in attendance, witnessing the gift.

Two trees of thread in stillness of the stitch,  
Were scrutinized from tassel down to sward.

Two trees of thread, but one had surely moved;  
A Libyan server ceased to sway his fan.

All felt the chill that comes uncalendared  
When ghostly breezes ruffle needlework.

A visionary gale had blown a frond;  
It fell upon the tiles at Tadmor's feet.

She stooped to gather that mistreated leaf  
When one deep slave girl pointed at the palms.

The trees of thread were dwindling into dust;  
A yellow vapor had obscured the wall.

Out of this topaz haze an entrance yawned—  
Undoubtedly the doorway to a park.

From the arched portal came a humming sound,  
So faint at first it minimized the gnat.

This tenuous lilt, the airy reaches trod  
To the full octave of a serenade.

*Song*

Great is the rose  
Infected by the tomb,  
Yet burgeoning  
Indifferent to death.

Wherein the dawn  
Did stumble to fulfill  
The rose has told  
In one simplicity.

That never life  
Relinquishes a bloom  
But to bestow  
An ancient confidence.

Great is the rose  
That challenges the crypt,  
And quotes milleniums  
Against the grave.

When droopers wan hear hopeful threnodies  
A thrill unveils the troops of Macedon.

The phalanx forms in cheering artery,  
And hoplites red outflank the median line.

Along the front run fanioned ralliers,  
Electric pricklings storm a coronal.

The Princess Tadmor, following the song  
Drew to the door depicted in the mist.

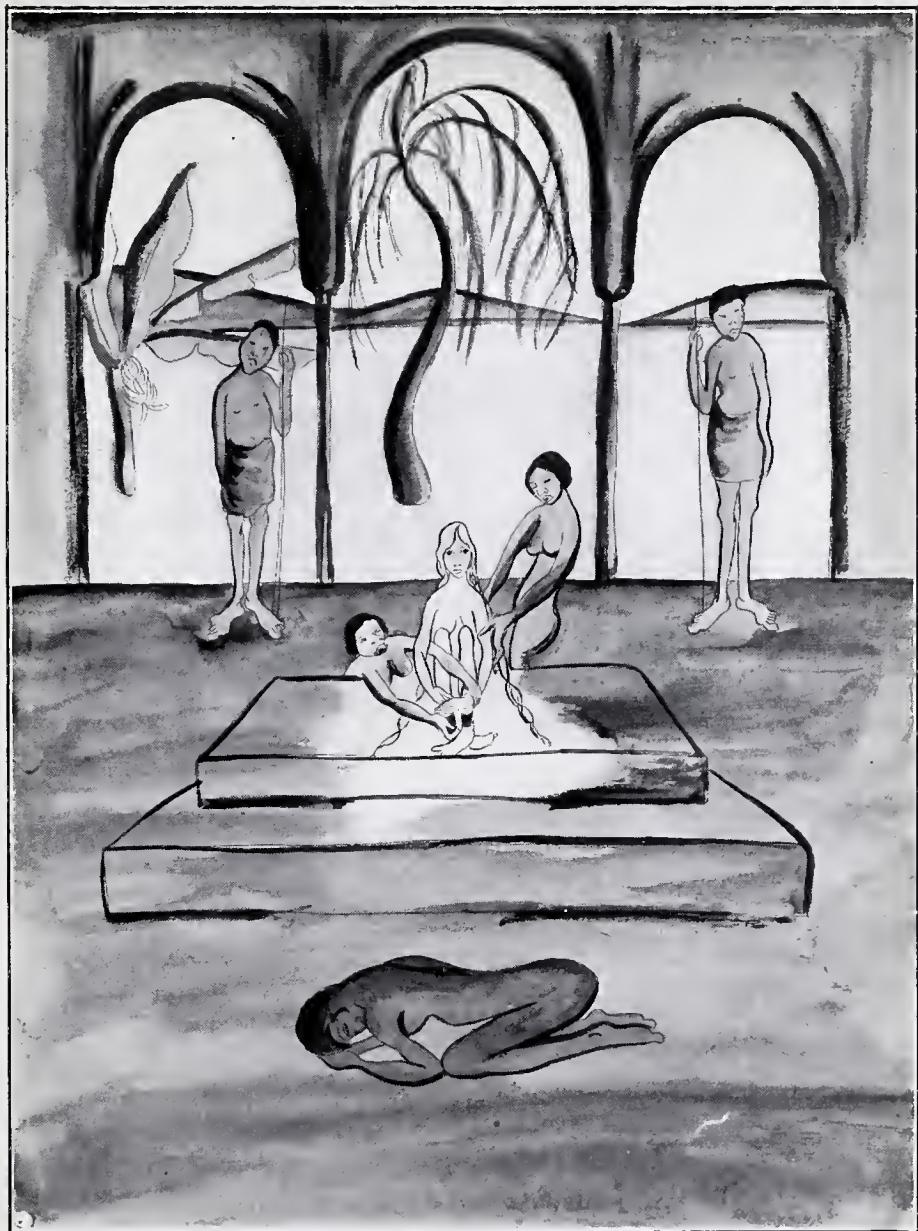
Before her went the praiser of the rose,  
An unseen singer chanting ecstasies.

Where sand had once companioned with the dirge  
New sovereigns reigned, the tendril and the bole.

A heavenly outskirt purposely had sagged,  
Some fringe of paradise that touched the earth.

A jasmined gard by crystal fountains cooled—  
The purple valley of a sure delight.

'Twas filled with trees and vines and waterfalls,  
With reed ventriloquists and talking plants.



"Upon a dais of Damascus blue  
His daughter crouched and bare of any weave. . . ."



The orchid there, the Rose of Jericho.  
The gelder in the chiton of the flake.

A hundred extradited humming birds  
In moonlight flashed to halt and orient.

The song had ended but that dewy wild  
Evinced an inclination to converse.

A moth in crimson whispered learnedly  
Of ferns that could vocabularies use.

Of buds that needed not interpreters  
To dress their nascent language in a noise.

A jade cascade broke into lisping spray,  
And spilled cajoling sentences from foam.

It named a hillside whence it had been lured  
By a sad mime who seemed beset with palms.

It gave the items of a 'take-me-down'—  
Described a journey on a rollered float.

With laughter told of staring flocks and herds  
That turned to see a cataract go by.

"Oh gentle, sweet and lettered waterfall,  
"Saw you a singer pass along this way?

"You would have noticed him in common garb,  
"Or in the burnished surplice of the gnat.

"He may have worn the talon and the tawn,  
"He may have worn less raiment than the wind."

As nymphs distraught have leaned and waked a  
source,  
So Tadmor woke a speaker in a vine.

"Within the dark rotunda of the grape,  
"Eternity sits fingering a void.

"A realm suspended in an interim—  
"The seedling's empire waiting to repeat.

"The waterfall retains its destiny—  
"The dripping sound allied to earthly peace.

"Adown the years, the leaves with rustlings soft,  
"Have soothed the heart where blunter music  
failed.

*Song*

There is no rose  
In all Illyria,  
No Sidon rose,  
No rose of Syria;

Like to the rose  
That in Palmyra charms  
A desert rose  
Beneath the desert palms.

In Shusan reigns  
The lily with the crown;  
And by the Nile  
A lotus of renown.

But only one  
More sweet than cascadel—  
The desert rose  
Beside a desert well.

There is no rose  
In Macedonia—

The Princess Tadmor running down an aisle,  
Came to an arbor made of unstripped rush.

Upon a bench and hunched to play the lute,  
There sat an angel singer smiting strings.

A slim fair youth, as angels often are,  
With eyes the green of isolated seas.

Astonishment struck both to kneeler's pose;  
Between them fell the jangling Grecian lute.

#### TADMOR

"It is that pagan god, with emerald eyes,  
"Who in the costume of the gnat prevailed.

"Whose aureate pinions strove above my face,  
"And overthrew interners in a dream.

"Would that I knew a ritual to please—  
"When Egypt strays or Greece patrols the night."

#### THE PRINCE

"I am not he who wore those golden wings,  
"Or flew to rescue you from sudden harm.

"I did not know a goddess was so near,  
"Else would a song have turned into a prayer.

"You see a prisoner taken by a king,  
"Who after ransom tarried here as guest.

"I now renounce all other deities  
"Even if you should care to disappear."

When two unconscious candidates for fanes  
Go slighting idols of antiquity;

The Phidian Zeus from exaltation slips,  
And Milo's model inventory takes.

There on their knees—Oh, Juno and Oh, Jove;  
Oh, Baal, Oh, Dian, and the Golden Calf.

They dared to kiss, expecting instant death  
But since they lived continued worshipping.

The night was theirs, the moon, the park—and love,  
Recurrences forecasted by the rose.

\* \* \* \* \*

They sacked Palmyra's cairns the other day—  
The serious pick and anxious-minded sieve.

Among the fragments of a broken vase  
Were clayen tablets in cuneiform.

Grave scholars matched the pieces on a board,  
And read this ancient romance of the palms.

It seems that Delos till the day he died  
Believed that Tadmor was a deity.

The wedges showed how Tadmor also erred—  
She always thought her idol was a god.

At dawn, according to the chronicle,  
The king into the gard enchanted came.

He brushed aside defending foliage,  
And gazing, saw mythology asleep.

Two images, a daughter and a prince,  
His children, dreaming leaners on a bench.

Their heads were close as deities intent,  
Their arms around each other as they slept.

The tablets told of a great wedding feast,  
Of altars raised and happy nights and days.

And on the corners of the clay were wings—  
In reddened gold—*the signet of the gnat!*

*Note.* (The gnat in Palmyra closely resembles a golden honey bee, so I have been informed.) N. C.

## THE END OF JULIET

WHEN we were in the romper clad our eyes  
    were always wet,  
We had a nurse who played for us the end of Juliet.  
We did not know who Shakespeare was, we did not  
    greatly care—  
Our only thought was Julie and we wept upon the  
    stair.  
The stage the limits of a rug, the wings retired  
    shawls,  
And yet Verona stood within those prosy nursery  
    walls.  
And though the citadels below thought grief was  
    merely fun  
We went on with the drama and that starry cast  
    of one.  
The years had shaken trees but twice, the leaves  
    were in the brown  
When we were told that nurse had sailed away to  
    Stratford Town.  
To witness some fair mimicry by Avon's gentle  
    light.  
And yet she gave no farewell buss and quite forgot  
    to write.  
The territories of the print are always in the hand;  
We read that fire in Stratford Town had burned the  
    Shakespeare stand.  
And then there came a bulletin that bursaries had  
    met  
To build a grander playhouse for the lovely Juliet.  
America was eager, and old provinces as well

To rig a grid with fifty drops, endow a curtain  
bell.

Oh, what a just huzzahing when a knight unfurls  
the roll,

And takes one tragic idyll from the harem of the  
mole.

The laurel girds in Ilium, the rush goes forth from  
Ur,

Golconda primes the guelder rose, Jerusalem the  
myrrh.

If we should ever venture to the scenes in Stratford  
Town,

We'd take no labeled folderol nor change to velvet  
gown;

But in familiar kirtle and remembered basinet  
Go forth to find our nurse who played the end of  
Juliet.

To pause before the posters of the gorgeous cochi-  
neal

In hopes to see her name between the head bow and  
the heel.

To dare the laureled entrances, the rushes drawn  
from Ur,

The dust of many roses and the vases filled with  
myrrh.

And if we could not find that nurse for myrtle  
and for bays—

To lay a nursery tussie there beside the great  
bouquets.\*

\* The poet's contribution to Shakespeare Week held by the American Shakespeare Foundation.

## THE CROXON AUCTION

**W**HEN the prudent Lady Croxon closed her mansion

It was I that brought the lady's pewter ware;  
At the auction, for two cushions I was bidding,  
'And I also got an ancient boudoir chair.

Now they tell me that the teapot's truly silver,  
That the chair came down from Cardinal Richelieu;  
Oh, the connoisseurs are calling every morning:  
"Would a damsel like to trade for something new?"

Once the pewter takes to turning into silver,  
Or a tusock talks of cardinals in red,  
It is not the time for any maid to falter,  
But to hold the breath and watch a wonder spread.

So they always find me gasping near my teapot,  
Or with duster kneeling down by Richelieu,  
And the connoisseurs themselves are agitated—  
Never knowing what good cardinals may do.

## MARCH OF THE SKELETONS

SMITHSONIAN

DRAW bone, jiggle the skull,  
Clapper the joints with art,  
Boy, girl, woman or man—  
Who can tell us apart?

Boy, girl, woman or man,  
What are comparisons?  
Lock step, heppety hep—  
March of the skeletons.

Draw bone, jiggle the skull,  
Flesh is only a shawl;  
Here you see the gallery  
Wearing nothing at all.

Here you see the gallery,  
Look in our eyes again;  
Once we wore suet too—  
Artery and vein.

Draw bone, jiggle the skull,  
Clapper the joints with art;  
Boy, girl, woman or man—  
Who can tell us apart?

Boy, girl, woman or man,  
Pick out the Janes and Johns;  
Lock step—heppety hep—  
March of the skeletons.

## THE PRINCE

THE ants, the millers and caterpillars  
Are making petitions each day;  
They are after the firkins and satin-lined jerkins—  
A prince cannot turn them away.

The millers assert that a prince must be fair  
And help with the loading of carts;  
That although a levy may sometimes be heavy—  
To abdicate only breaks hearts.

In a counsellor's gown I've repeatedly said  
That the limits were reached long since;  
Yet still they come pleading and one must show  
breeding  
When subjects insist on a prince.

## THE GREAT EXPLOSION

WE were all at the dining room table  
And just about ready to sup,  
On the twenty-ninth evening of April—  
The night that the moon blew up.

Our neighbors were out in a jiffy,  
The engines came into the square;  
Policemen warned all to be quiet  
For fear of disturbing the air.

The building department sent wreckers  
Supposing some pieces might fly;  
We huddled on porches till daybreak  
And stared at the smoke in the sky.

There was Mary and Molly and Mazie,  
And mother was dishing the greens  
When Luna went off like a bombshell  
And burst into smithereens.

Now we have grandma diplomas  
And over the porcelain cup  
We tell the greatest of stories—  
The night that the moon blew up.

## NATURE'S MIRACLE

CAME a timid sand dune  
To a pagan creek;  
Raised its pin-point boulders—  
Basining the peak.

Thereupon a beach gust,  
In an orbit gowned,  
Blew that dune in granules  
All the world around.

Sand fell on seraglios  
In Algeria;  
Baskets full were wafted  
Far as Florida.

Tons of falling feldspar  
Splashed the Hebrides;  
Infant isles emerging  
Dazed the Caribbees.

Surf lines lost all order  
In the Orient;  
From the mid-Pacific  
Rose a continent.

## THE MASTER OF THE WIND

**B**ENEATH a tree  
In ancient Turkistan  
There sits a dwarf  
Who calmly waves a fan.

All balmy blows  
Or storms that devastate  
Proceed from thence—  
So travellers relate.

That dwarf he sits  
In ducats to the knees  
And charges for  
Each movement of a breeze.

None lay great stress  
Upon that midget man;  
They say a djinn  
Resides within the fan.

Still there's the tree  
With habitations pinned;  
One leaf may house  
The Master of the Wind.



"Beneath a tree  
In ancient Turkistan  
There sits a dwarf  
Who calmly waves a fan. . . ."



## THE HONOR OF THE CRIB

THE boasters come deriding  
The porringer and bib;  
They taunt us with beginnings—  
The Honor of the Crib.

They say that we came hither  
As beads in cartons green.  
The pods that we have opened  
Held nothing but a bean.

They say there is no ocean  
In any lovely shell;  
That some one lied in Zurich  
And made up William Tell.

But we are early cynics,  
We show it in our eyes.  
We know we came from Heaven—  
We know where Heaven lies.

The surges in our urges  
Made drops of water round;  
We learned to draw the corner  
Before there was a sound.

We calmly sip the finger—  
Go on with William Tell,  
Defend that unseen tumbler,  
The ocean in a shell.

## IN FORECASTLES ADRIFT

**I**N the blythesome times in West Street—  
In the days of the Yo-Heave-O,  
There was many a poet went to sea  
Who never thought he'd go.

For they crimped them fresh and easy  
By the light of the tavern door,  
And they sailed at flood for Ispahan  
Or the poet's Singapore.

And thus were the verses written  
That carry the roller's lift,  
The fling of a briney balladry  
In forecastles adrift.

They scrawled upon the bunk boards  
With pencil, chalk and tar  
And by Parnassian metres posed  
The Hitch of Zanzibar.

The odes of Jack Gorilla  
And Stevie Portugee;  
The lines of Chapel Billy's best  
And the darkey Jubilee.

Old cargo boats have got them—  
The Duke and the Mary Ann  
Still show the lovely lyrics writ  
By the poet Callahan.

And on the flats of Aden  
And by Hoboken's shore  
Are hulks that trembling still unveil  
McGlory's signature.

It is a fame remembered  
That ocean gave a lift  
When poets rolled the sleeve to write  
In forecastles adrift.

## BRAD OF BERKLEY COMMON

**H**E sat, a legless gentle  
Within a hand drawn wain;  
He was Brad of Berkley Common  
Carving on a weather-vane.

He was Brad of Berkley Common  
And his steed from Araby  
Was his brother, Pacing Peter,  
Foolish from his infancy.

Around old Berkley Common,  
In the summer time each year,  
The witless drew the legless  
Who carved the chanticleer.

There was no lack of orders  
For cocks to watch the skies,  
The mask in harness drawing  
The wagon of the wise.

And while one whittled magic  
Upon a roadside green,  
The other stared in wonder  
At countries never seen.

Eventually the region  
Could boast unnumbered spies  
That spun upon a spindle  
And bluffed the timid skies.

Each shower filed full notice  
Before it dared to rain;  
For barns in Berkley Common  
Had over-flows of grain.

The winds were early chidden,  
One gnome could broom the snow;  
A clime feared wooden warders  
Would flap the wing and crow.

When wizards take the highway  
They put on extra airs,  
A glamour and an oddness  
Transmuted to their wares.

They ride in little tumrels  
And stricken panoply,  
But well they know enchantment  
Confers great dignity.

## WAITING FOR GOLIATH

I AM that stone a savage instep hates,  
The pebble drawn to snap a Scythian's wheel;  
I am the nog, the last ounce in the trim  
That bids the ballast calm a shaken keel,

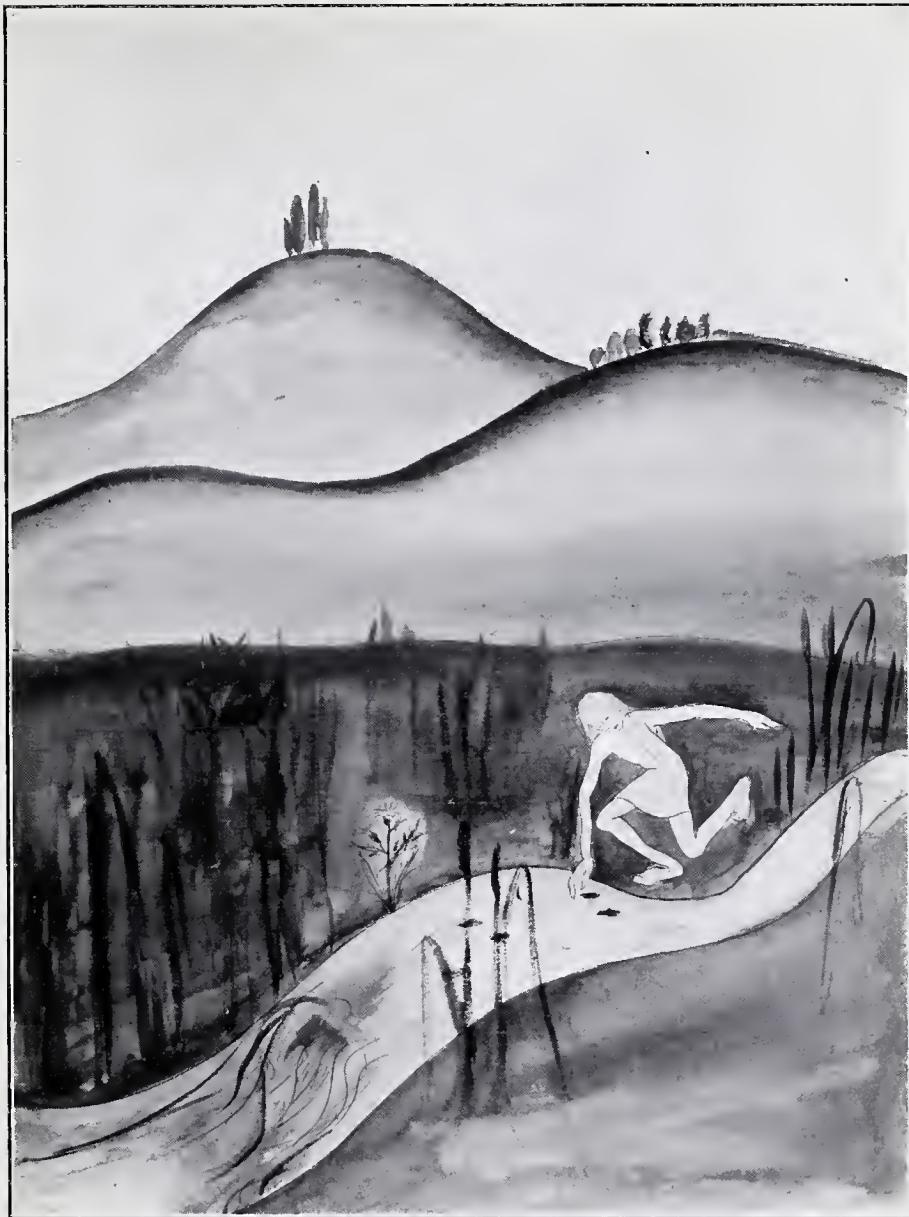
Invaders halt when I roll down the hill  
Upon a mission for a cause forsook;  
The hermit's hour, the time for iron quills—  
Another stone has fallen in the brook.

In the Valley of Elah there ran  
'Twixt the camps of Manassah and Dan  
A brook banked with thistles  
And paved with white missiles  
For slingers assigned to the van.

In a kink of the brook was a swirl,  
That could jealous the round of a pearl;  
A watery seer  
Bent on gauging the sphere  
To calibres fit for a hurl.

There were ovals, and agates full blown,  
And one was allied to a throne,  
For down an old path  
Preparing for Gath  
Came David in search of a stone.

I am that stone a savage instep hates,  
The image armed by æons in a brook;  
And yet no heart in all of heraldry  
Shows more despatch when causes are forsook.



"For down an old path  
Preparing for Gath  
Came David in search of a stone."



## THE JAVA MAN

UPON the Isle of Java  
And nigh to Cavern Row,  
A cave man lost his conic head  
One million years ago.

And now the seers are saying  
This prehistoric find  
Shows how a cave girl's idea made  
A shape to fit a mind.

But we who cheer that cave girl  
From Gobi to the Nile,  
Condemn not on a natal slant  
Once worn in Java Isle;

For if they all were happy  
In cycles long ago,  
What matter if an idea made  
The head in Cavern Row.

## SHERIDAN'S HORSE

WE went calling on Crœsus,  
Talked till our ponies neighed;  
Trying to tell a rich man  
Kinks of the charger's trade.

We had thought that a head jess  
Lessens a stallion's bile—  
Sheridan's horse in a warehouse  
Over on Governor's Isle.

We had drafted partitions  
Fit for a pawer's stall;  
Crœsus stared from a window,  
Answered us not at all.

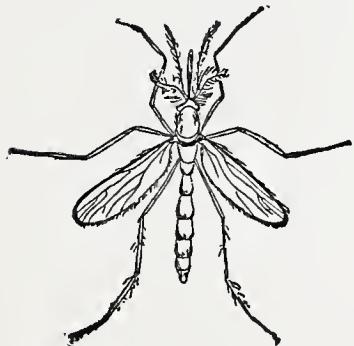
Oh, the looks of our ponies  
When we came forth again,  
Minus Saladin's bridle,  
Saddle of Tamerlane.

We have love for our stallions—  
Winchester, Lexington;  
Praise for an old embalmer  
Saving the hide of one;

As for the tongueless ducats  
Crœsus has rendered mute,  
We can tambour for pennies—  
Pæan a great repute.

Sheridan's horse in a temple,  
Bitted with turquoise chain;  
Girthed and bridled and saddled,  
Ready to run again.

Generals standing as hostlers,  
Proud of a warehouse nag;  
There in star gazer's raiment,  
Crœsus, himself, with a flag.



## MISS BROOKS MAKES REQUEST

*(She was six at the time)*

**S**AID Miss Brooks unto Jehovah:  
"My head feels very light;  
"Do you mind if I omit them—  
"My prayers, this Sunday night?"

"Oh, Lord God, I'm so weary,  
"As weary as can be;  
"Would it inconvenience Heaven  
"Or disturb your dignity?"

The Lord God (so she told it  
Unto succeeding cooks),  
Was equal in politeness:  
"Don't mention it, Miss Brooks."

## THE MOON OF BROOKLYN

WHEN the moon comes over Brooklyn  
On time with the borough clock,  
'Tis the same that saw Palmyra  
And the walls of Antioch.

'Tis the moon, our first relation,  
That kindled the Lesbian bard,  
And shone on the old Ægean  
As it shines on the Navy Yard.

The moon beloved by Homer,  
That Tycho Brahe drew;  
That lights the wreaths for soldiers  
In Bedford Avenue.

## THE PARADE OF THE POPPIES

HERE were the palm and myrtle  
Flanking the wreaths of bay;  
Then came poppies in cohorts,  
Orchids from Paraguay.

All of the files of iris,  
Ghosts of old blooms that blushed,  
But with the poppies passing  
Both of the curbs were hushed.

Yearly we hear a murmur—  
Only one flower salves  
Rents in our combat legions,  
Gaps in the last Zouaves.

Not from a frayed tradition  
Entered the poppies red,  
But from a sudden vista—  
Halls of the newly dead.

Why not one day for soldiers—  
Conords and Regnivilles,  
All of the buds wore olive  
Climbing the Gallic hills.

There are the palm and myrtle,  
Also the wreaths of bay,  
Then come the lovely poppies—  
First in the heart's array.

## HANNAH OF HAVERHILL

**H**ANNAH of Haverhill back in town—  
Run for a noggin of rum;  
Get her a claddy or else she'll swoon,  
'Spite of the blockhouse drum.

Hannah of Haverhill back in town—  
See what she's got to show,  
Caps of eleven tawny ones,  
Feathered with hawk and crow.

Give her an escort of elders grand  
Unto her own abode;  
Off at the gallop a courier  
Taking the Boston Road.

Caps of eleven Iroquois.  
Think you the score was steep?  
Nail them up on the meeting door,  
Sachems who fell asleep.

Papaws down by the Merrimac,  
Willing enough to talk,  
How she missioned them one by one  
Muting a tomahawk.

Thimble berries, they mimic her—  
Casting their caps away;  
Catbirds issue a saucy note,  
Taunting the topknot jay.

Sumacs gather in clusters there  
    Red with their laughter still;  
Who is the great evangelist?  
    Hannah of Haverhill.

## THE POE COTTAGE

**T**HERE they dwelt in the wrennet's cot  
Just as it was to be;  
Paced the halls of a miniature—  
Poe and Annabel Lee.

He was garbed in a courtly suit,  
She in Colonial low;  
Heads together they walked the halls—  
Annabel Lee and Poe.

These indeed were particular hours;  
No one tells of their glee,  
How they laughed in the wrennet's cot—  
Poe and Annabel Lee.

What if all of the snow that fell  
Never was really snow;  
What if all of their griefs were thus—  
Annabel Lee and Poe.

What if all of the shadows there  
Merely an imagery;  
Nothing to do with the wrennet's cot—  
Poe and Annabel Lee.

## ALI BABA'S CAVERN

**S**CIENTISTS are poets—  
Listen how they rave:  
“Ali Baba’s cavern  
“In a cherry’s nave.”

Back of secret panels  
Lie the peach-pit halls;  
Pecks of Burmah rubies  
Sticking to the walls.

Ali Baba’s cavern  
Underneath a lens—  
How the Forty Thieves must feel  
Losing all their dens.

## THE WATER GUARD

**I**N the dusk of a happy evening  
Somebody called for a bard;  
Then, to a twanging music  
Song of the Water Guard.

### SONG

They were stingy and dingy,  
They would never give in;  
Stood by the camels with sabres—  
Scoffed at the leader's kin.

Scape the sweat from your step-ins,  
Prick your blisters and sip;  
We are marching on Tunis—  
Lords of the swollen lip.

If you want to arrive there  
Where the drinking is cool,  
Stand aside from the amblers  
Lugging the final pool.

We who never had conquered,  
Half of us evil-starred,  
We came through with the first files  
Thanks to the Water Guard.

## DANTE ON THE FERRY

(*To PASQUALE MACCHIARULO—Poet*)

**O**H, its Dante Alighieri is a poet,  
And he's working for the Lackawanna Line,  
Just a bootblack writing lyrics on the ferry  
In between the times he gives unto a shine.

Oh, it's Dante Alighieri feels emotion  
When the siren blares an octave in one note,  
And he scribbles down a stormy hearted stanza—  
How the Bay of Naples rolls a fisher's boat.

In the dark he hears a phantom bow watch hailing,  
Marks the Half Moon heading for the Tappan  
Zee;  
Glimpses luggers slipping south without a side-  
light—  
For beyond the Narrows lieth Italy.

There's the fog bell calling slips for old Man-  
hattan,  
There's the jingle from the wheelhouse overhead,  
And it's Dante Alighieri sees the lustre  
Of the pierhead lanterns done in green and red.

When the Borden stallions cross the morning run-  
ways  
And the guard gates toss aloft their dripping  
hands,

He is visioning the beauty of the long line  
And he's hearing clinking sounds for sarabands.

With his breath he makes a mirror out of leather;  
With a rag he burnishes the Jersey heel;  
But it's evident he's caught the splendid notion  
That the poets and the bootblacks always kneel.

## THE ESCORT

WE have a heavy escort  
Seeing us through the wood,  
Great Heart and Don Quixote  
Richard and Robin Hood.

Others of equal valor,  
Versed in the villain's law;  
Thus do the dragons quiver—  
Trembles the lion's paw.

Sometimes the wood is darker  
Even than Egypt's spell;  
That is the hour for Jason  
Gareth and William Tell.

Anyone seeking an escort,  
Anyone needing a knight,  
We but hint of our heroes  
Having observed their might.

## EXODUS OF THE LEAVES

**T**WAS the time that marked the exodus of  
summer,  
But the leaves on uniforms could not agree;  
Some were wanting brass cuirasses like the Swiss  
Guards,  
Others voted for a lighter panoply.

There were those enamored of an autumn maxim,  
And the trees were asked opinion in the brief;  
Who should know so well the chevron for the  
frondage,  
Or the blouse to fit the valor of a leaf?

From September to the middle of October,  
Great confusion in the Quartermaster stores;  
There were murmurings about Crusader costumes,  
Also what the Spaniard wore against the Moors.

It all ended on a somber Sunday morning,  
When a cheer was heard within a timber hall,  
And old sergeants started issuing equipment  
Most becoming for the veterans of Fall.

Then the maple leaves went trooping down the  
pathways  
In the scarlet of the Waterloo huzzars;  
And the oaks put on the russet of the sapper  
With the castle of the engineers of Mars.

Not a hemlock lacked the tunic dipped in henna;  
In gray shakos went the buckthorn down the  
fens;  
And the locust for the sake of last endeavor,  
Donned the turban of the lordly Saracens.

All the birches marched in kilties of the Black  
Watch  
With the rear guard moving out in double time;  
It was all according to a sudden order  
Over which the leaves hold yearly pantomime.

